

K-364

1907

Olivet Hill Methodist Episcopal Church

Olivet Hill, near Galena

Private

Used until about 1979, when its ceiling structure collapsed, the 1907 frame, vernacular, late Victorian Gothic Revival church is the second building to serve black Methodists of the Olivet Hill community. The first frame church, moved about 1863 from the nearby white Olivet Methodist Church in Galena, was probably that congregation's first building, dating from about 1804, the main building until 1842, when a new brick church was built. Between much of the period from 1842 to 1863, while adjacent to the Galena church, the old frame building was said to have been used for enslaved and free black worshippers and Sunday school classes in a period of increasing segregation within the Methodist Church. By the turn of the twentieth century the community that was begun before the Civil War by landowning free blacks was large and thriving, so a quite costly, elaborate, and large building was undertaken. Its construction predated by only a few years the exodus that began with farm mechanization and better employment prospects elsewhere during World War I and continued through the agricultural depression of the 1920s, the general depression of the 1930s, and World War II. Architecturally, the church is among the more complex of the county's rural churches of the period. It is quite unlike the more common three-part churches (vestibule-tower, nave, chancel projection, all end-to-end). This church's massing is irregular, there is interesting shingling and trim on the main gable end, and the interior arrangement is unusual, with the pews not across the narrow width of the main section but facing the long north side and the sizable wing there. It may have been built from a purchased plan.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. K-364

Magi No. 1503645708

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Olivet Hill Methodist Episcopal Church

and/or common

2. Location

street & number East side, southern spur of O.P. 410 (Olivet Hill Rd.)
.6 mile east of Galena ☐ not for publicationcity, town Galena ☒ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant unsafe

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Trustees, Olivet Hill M.E. Church

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Galena, state and zip code Maryland 21635

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber JKH 8

street & number Cross Street folio 86

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Highly inaccurate survey by Md. Commission on Afro-American History & Culture

date undated ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust,

city, town 21 State Circle, Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

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Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The 1907 frame, vernacular, late Victorian Gothic Revival church at Olivet Hill has a 30' x 40' gable-roofed main section with its axis east-west and an original gable-roofed perpendicular wing (estimated at 8' x 18') from the center of the main section's north side. On the interior the pews do not face the end opposite the entry but the wing, which is used for a piano, choir seating, and other usual church-front furnishings. The belfry tower with its tall, steep, pyramidal roof flared at the eaves rises out of the main-section mass at its southwest corner. The single entry is below it, in the south bay of the gable end, into an enclosed vestibule. Except for the slightly recessed approach gable, which is shingled with fish-scale wood shingles, the church is now covered with asphalted panels, applied in 1949 over the original horizontal, lapped weatherboard. The main windows are pointed, double-hung, and unusually tall and wide. There are three found windows with tracery: in the approach gable of the main section, in the wing gable, and on the approach side of the tower's second level. Almost all exposed wood in the interior is of pine but grained to appear like oak, a popular practice at the turn of the century as well as earlier. Possibly structurally inadequate from the beginning but also abetted by the deterioration of the south wall, the bay-framed ceiling fell about 1979. The building has not been used since that time.

The foundation is brick piers except for a continuous foundation wall of brick under the approach gable-end. On the south side near the west corner there is a corner stone with the inscription "Olivet M.E. Church 1907." There is no evidence that this church is rebuilt from an earlier one.

The church is one-storey but tall. Most of the wall area is covered with the 1949-applied asphalt sheets, which have a thick, fibrous insulation-type backing. In some areas the pseudo-stone asphalt sheets are missing, exposing the original wall covering. The horizontal, lapped weatherboard has an exposure of about 4-1/2". There are 4" double cornerboards that were covered by the new siding. The main section's southwest corner post is badly eaten by termites and/or rotted, and the entire long south wall appears to be in poor condition, bulging outward near the top. This wall movement either contributed to the ceiling collapse, in which the bay-framed ceiling joists slid off the south wall plates, or was at least partly caused by the ceiling collapse.

(continued)

8. Significance

Survey No. K-364

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Black History

Specific dates 1907 Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The surviving church in the black community of Olivet Hill is the second, the first having been the early nineteenth-century frame church that was moved about 1863 from Olivet Methodist Church in Galena. The large, quite costly 1907 church was built when the old church deteriorated and became too small. At the turn of the century the community was large and thriving, just before the exodus from the county that began with better employment prospects elsewhere during World War I and continued through the agricultural depression of the 1920s, the general depression of the 1930s and World War II. As a result, the church always was too large for the community. Architecturally, the church is among the more complex of the county's late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century churches. It is quite unlike the more common three-part frame churches: vestibule-tower, nave, chancel projection, all end to end. This church's massing is irregular, there is interesting approach-gable end detail, and the interior arrangement is unusual, with the pews not across the narrow width of the main section but facing the long north side and the sizable wing there. The church may have been built from a purchases plan, which seems to have been inadequate in its specifications for roof construction, causing a partial collapse about 1979 that left the building unsafe for further use. For the 70 years of its existence, however, the church, along with the adjacent school, was a focal point for the religious and community life of Olivet Hill.

(Continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-364

Francis Asbury, The Journal of the Rev. Francis Asbury, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church from August 7, 1771, to December 7, 1815. 3 vols. New York: Published by N. Bangs and T. Mason for the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1821.

_____, The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury. 3 vols. Edited by Elmer Clark. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification _____

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Margaret Q. Fallaw, Survey Consultant		
	County Commissioners of Kent County		
organization	Historical Society of Kent County	date	April 16, 1985
	Court House		778-4600
street & number	Cross Street	telephone	778-3499
city or town	Chestertown	state	Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

The main section's slightly recessed approach gable is not weatherboarded but pedimented and covered with fish-scale wood shingles. At the base of the pediment, near the level of the side eaves, the wall is kicked outward to overhang the lower wall slightly. The joint is trimmed with the same medium-large ogee-with-fillets as used on the cornice. This treatment of the gable end is handsome, well-executed, and unusual in the county. The main section's rear gable and the wing gable are not treated in this manner.

The three exposed sides of the second level of the tower is finished in the same manner as the shingled gable. The front is continuous with it, also continuing the same pedimenting trim at the break between materials. Like the gable, the tower's shingled area is also flared at the base, above the trim. Above the enclosed, shingled section of the tower is an open belfry supported by four large corner posts with simple rails and a simple, single criss-cross balustrade on each side, parts of which are now missing. A bell is in place. The belfry ceiling is of beaded board. The tall, pyramidal spire above the belfry is flared at the eaves, repeating the theme used on the approach end. The spire roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

There are two brick chimneys, originally for use with stoves. One is within the rear gable-end wall of the main section, through the south slope of the roof and just to the south of the single, central rear window. The other chimney is diagonally opposite, within the approach gable-end wall and just to the north of the central window. The chimneys are heavily patched with mortar; they each have a two-course cap.

The roofs are covered with deteriorating asphalt shingles. The center ridge area is sagging. The main section and wing eaves are finished in a manner commonly seen in rural Gothic Revival churches. They overhang the walls about 12-15"; at the ends the overhang is about 15-18". There are no returns, the cornice is not boxed, and there is no soffit. The undersides of the rafter tails are open, and the underside of the roof decking above them is of narrow, beaded tongue-and-groove boards. The rafter tail ends are cut perpendicular to the rafters, not to the ground. The fascia has a c. 4" ogee-and-fillets crown molding.

There are three unusually large double-hung windows on the main section's south, long side, evenly spaced, though the first one is placed a considerable distance from the southwest corner to avoid the vestibule-tower, which is windowless on the entry level. The same size and type window is also used in the center of both front and rear gable-end and on the north, long side, one to each side of the wing. Both architrave head and upper sash are pointed, as in the upper part of a triangle. The lower sash has two large lights and the upper sash two large lights that are triangular at their tops, with a small rhombus-shaped light between them at the center of the overall triangle's apex. The sash are glazed with a deep yellow colored glass, some has been replaced. There are no shutters nor any evidence of former ones. Trim is plain and 4-1/4" wide; quarter-round molding was added to the outer face at the time the asphalt-sheet siding was applied. The two,
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angled head-trim pieces may have had tails that extended beyond the jamb trim; if so, this was cut off at the time of re-siding. The architrave is 57" wide and perhaps 12 feet tall.

The wing's two windows are the same type, but smaller. Architrave width is 45". There is one window centered in each wing side; the gable-end has no window.

The only entry is in the west gable end, into the vestibule at the base of the tower in the southwest corner of the main section. There are double doors in a ca. 4' x 7' opening. Each door has three vertical panels, the top one smallest and square. The panels are recessed and raised in a Colonial Revival manner. There are sidelights on each side with yellow glass, stippled on the interior, over a recessed and raised panel that aligns with the lowest door panels. Trim is plain and 4-1/4" wide. Above the doors and sidelights there is a triangular transom, with a plain 2" transom bar. The transom has three lights, the lower and outer two nearly triangular and and the center one at the apex a rhombus. These lights also have yellow glass. The entire entry probably was purchased as a unit from a millwork establishment specializing in church parts. There are a heavy wooden sill and a pair of aluminum screen doors. In front of the entry is a concrete stoop with a step nearly level with the ground. In the approach gable of the main section, the wing gable, and the west side of the shingled, center portion of the tower there is a round, nine-light window with the tracery slightly curved.

On the interior the fallen ceiling (most of the main section's) lies on the pews and floor. The vestibule, however, is intact. Windowless, it measures about 7 feet deep by 8 feet wide. The lower walls have oak-grained wainscoting; the upper walls are of yellow-painted plaster. The ceiling has been tiled over the plaster, though there is still a hole for the bell-pull. There is a 48" wide door from vestibule to nave. The door has nine vertical recessed and raised panels, in three rows. As with the exterior entry doors, the top panels are smaller. On the nave side each panel of the top row has central bulls eyes. There is a porcelain knob and box lock. Like the church's other interior wood parts, the door has been painted almost a raw sienna color and then crudely grained with a lighter color to resembled oak. This was popular at the turn of the century, as it had been earlier. Similar graining that was done about the same year is seen at Rehobeth Methodist Church in Sassafraz (K-128) although the church itself dates to 1859. Local painters (particularly the Hamiltons of Georgetown) advertised graining into the 1930s.

The main nave and wing projection are also fully wainscoted, with the upper walls plastered. The 3" wide, beaded, vertical, tongue-and-groove board wainscoting is also grained to resemble oak. The chair rail has a simple shallow shelf with the same molding above and below: a rounded ogee- and-bevel profile. The floor is of narrow to medium random-width pine that has been painted and is partially covered with carpeting. There are no baseboards. The wing's raised floor is fully carpeted. Door and window trim, all grained, is 4-1/2" wide overall and is symmetrical as was fashionable
(continued)

around 1900. There is a central shallow cove flanked by astragals and 1" outside fillets.

The ceiling was flat with lath and plaster, with its few joists originally resting on the wall plates, though the method of intersection with the wing framing at the wing opening is not clear. The ceiling was bay-framed and trussed; the whole system seems inadequate for the span and to counteract the outward thrust of the rafters on the upper walls. Joists measuring 3-1/2" x 8" spanned the 30-foot width of the main section; they were spaced about 5-6 feet apart. Between them were perpendicular (therefore ladder-like) members measuring 2" x 5-3/4" and 24" on center. They did little except to prevent twisting and racking and to provide a nailing surface for lath. The vertical, king-post trusses were fastened only to the five or six true joists and seem to have been tied to the common rafters (c. 24" o.c.), though there does seem to be a ridge pole. It appears that the upper south wall was pushed outward (possibly involving termite damage there, however), the joists slid off and down, and the king-post truss pieces broke. This is a rare kind of church ceiling framing for Kent County, for an especially wide span, and it does seem to be underbuilt. Most late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Kent County churches have high ceilings, finished along the rafters to the tie beams and then on their undersides. Though the roof structure of Mowbray Chapel (K-247), a mid-nineteenth-century Greek Revival building at Cliffs in Quaker Neck, could not be seen well, it does seem to employ the same trussed method but with heavier and more frequently placed important members.

Surprisingly, the pew rows do not run across the narrow width of the main section but along its axis. They face the wing, toward the west. The pews are quite plain. Their ends are slightly shaped and have the same bulls' eyes as the vestibule-nave door. They also have the same faux-oak graining. There is one long north-south aisle from the vestibule, along the long south wall, that intersects with two and perhaps three perpendicular aisles that run north-south.

The floor of the wing is three steps higher than the floor of the main section. In front of the wing, still within the main section, there is a railed platform. The balustrade has a square newel and turned and square colonial revival type balusters. Beyond, toward the wing is the communion rail, which has been modified; the back has been closed with 1/4" wood-grained plywood paneling. There are twisted-rope balusters 6-3/4" on center.

The site is high in relation to the surrounding area but quite level, with lawns. There is a grove of trees near the north property line, close to the church. A large tree stands in front of the approach gable-end, between the church's iron fence and Olivet Hill Road's southern spur that passes in front of the church and ends in front of the adjacent old school, now the church hall/Sunday School room. The approach gable-end is about 20 feet east of the road. There is a gate in the fence centered on the church's entry. In front of the church, near the entry, is a now-blank announcement board. The old school is beyond the church's south lawn, also with gable end toward the road. The cemetery is to the rear of the church, to the east and southeast. There are
(continued)

some rough, unmarked stones, but most are marked, perhaps 70-80 altogether. Scattered in the cemetery are shrubs.

To the north and northwest from the site a few of the community's houses can be seen among trees; on the next lot to the north is a mid-twentieth-century "ranch" house. To the south, beyond the school, a field of tall corn obstructs further views. To the east, beyond the cemetery, are trees, preventing further views. To the west are rolling, tilled fields with groves of trees in the distance. Across the fields about half a mile in the distance a few Galena buildings can be seen, Olivet Methodist church on the Galena-Massey Road among them. From the church site it is apparent that Olivet Hill is on the highest ground in the vicinity; indeed it is really a sort of plateau; though the drop to the west is quite gradual, that to the north and northeast (not visible) is quite abrupt.

The Olivet Hill community, east of Galena with access only from Route 290 (the Galena-Sassafras road), seems to have been an area of early black land ownership and settlement. Transactions with blacks (denoted as "free Negroes") as both buyers and sellers are recorded in the Kent County land records in the 1850s and even earlier (at least one in 1839). The history of the community has never been adequately researched however. (See also reports for K-597, Galena Silver Mine, and K-586, Olivet Hill School.) At least some of these early free blacks (such as Thomas Peaker and Isaac Brown) seemed to have enough land for at least subsistence farming. Whether or not they also worked on area farms owned by whites or at other jobs is not known. Later, as the community became more settled and plots were sold or divided among heirs, the small-farm character of the community changed. During the late nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century the men of the neighborhood mostly labored on nearby farms or in Galena while the women worked on nearby farms as cooks, did day work, or took in washing.

With the county population at a record 18,500, by 1900 the population of Olivet Hill seems to have been at its greatest, one explanation for the unusually large church that was built in 1907. However, with better jobs available elsewhere during World War I and the agricultural depression after the war followed by general depression, accompanied by increasing farm mechanization, Olivet Hill's population began to shrink. World War II only accelerated the process. Today there are about 22 occupied dwellings, including several mobile homes, fewer than earlier. Some abandoned houses stand in ruins or near-ruins, and on some lots there are evidences of former dwellings. Though there are several mid-twentieth-century houses, most are two-storey frame buildings that appear to date from the last quarter of the nineteenth century and from the early twentieth century. (See reports for K-592 and K-593 for a discussion of a particularly prevalent type of house.) Most community residents who are employed no longer work in Kent County but in Cecil County and in Delaware. Some have retired and returned after living and working for many years in northern urban areas.

Methodism had been introduced early to the Galena area, in 1773, at Mr. Dixon's house by the well-known itinerant and "Father of American Methodism," Francis Asbury. However, it was not until shortly after 1800 that the first meeting house seems to have been built. Early Methodism ministered and appealed to both blacks and whites at combined meetings. Both free and enslaved blacks were early drawn to Methodism in spite of the paradoxes it presented. As William Williams says in his book about the early history of Methodism on the Delmarva Peninsula, "no other religious group on the Peninsula treated blacks better. Early Methodist itinerants worked very hard to make black converts and spoke out in a clear voice against slavery. By contrast, at least some clergy of other denominations seemed disinterested in blacks, and a few supported slavery. Even the Quakers and Nicholites, who spoke out vehemently against slavery, showed little interest in recruiting black members" (p. 112). In addition blacks, as many whites, found appealing the Methodist emphasis on the conversion experience, rather than formal instruction and ritual. In the beginning both blacks and whites worshipped together, as befitted a religion that held that blacks were not inferior to

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whites. Yet black Methodists in practice were relegated to third-class status, below the second-class status of white women. As Williams says, "Blacks were restricted to the back of the church or the gallery during regular worship, were limited to an area behind the speaker's platform at camp meetings, and could only join all-black class meetings, which were often led by white men. There is even some indication that while in the gallery, blacks were forced to stand." (p. 111) The 1842 Galena Methodist Church was built with a gallery, undoubtedly for blacks only; when the church was "Victorianized" later in the nineteenth century and blacks were no longer in attendance, it was removed. Although a few blacks were known as effective preachers (such as Harry Hosier), all the regular circuit appointments as ministers were for white men.

In spite of these paradoxes, blacks on the Peninsula became Methodists in great numbers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in even greater percentages of the population as a whole than did whites. However, black dissatisfaction increased as the Methodist stance against slavery seemed to soften during the early nineteenth century, with black Methodists taking note of this change and black membership slowly eroding after about 1810. White Methodists in Kent County, however, seemed to have manumitted slaves by will to a significant extent, though this has not been studied in detail. White Methodists also seemed increasingly uncomfortable with the emotionalism and demonstrative worship sometimes shown by black members and sought to control it. In some cases enthusiasm resulted in physical damage to church buildings, and some churches came to require a white member's presence at any meeting of blacks. This also might have related to white fear of blacks' using such occasions to air their grievances and organize themselves against white oppression.

Blacks, both free and slave, came to desire their own, independent churches. At least a few semi-independent or independent congregations began from the late 1830s through the 1850s, though their history is not well documented. Encouraged by the Civil War, probably especially by the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, the move to entirely separate churches accelerated. By the fall of 1865, after the end of the war, at least six or seven Kent County churches led the drive to provide schools for black children, who previously had been unschooled, though violence, intimidation, and church burnings (in Millington and Edesville) ensued.

The details of the early years of the Olivet Hill Church have been lost, and it is no longer known how it relates to the overall development of black churches in Kent County. The earliest deed for church property seems to be the one dated March 5, 1869 (Kent Co. Land Records, JKH 8/86), though the language of the deed indicates that a church building was already located on it. The transaction was between Daniel Roe, a black of the community who was also a trustee, to the trustees of the "Col'd M. E. Church called the Col'd Olivet Chapel." The trustees were Moses Young, Robert Paca [probable misspelling of Peaker], Thomas Paca [same], Daniel Roe, George Rasin, Norris Miller, Charles Young, John Caulk, and Shadrack Thompson. They purchased 94 square perches for \$35. The land was described as that "upon which the said
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Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, called the Colored Olivet [sic] Chapel is lying" . . . "near the Colored people's village, called the 'Upper Branch.'"

According to the community oral tradition, however, as well as that of the white Galena Olivet Methodist Church, the history of the Olivet Hill congregation dates back to at least 1863. According to the 88th anniversary program of the church (1951), in 1863 Olivet Hill Methodists moved to Olivet Hill the old, frame, first church building no longer needed by the Galena congregation after their new brick church was built in 1842. It may, in fact, have served from 1842-1863 when it stood adjacent to the new church in Galena as the place allocated for black worship and/or classes since blacks were becoming increasingly segregated within the Methodist church. One can almost envision the building being moved about 6/10 of a mile due east across perhaps frozen fields from one church site to another; it is not likely that the building could have negotiated the winding, narrow road leading into Olivet Hill. The anniversary booklet states that the church lot was bought from a black named named Isaac Hopkins. The deed, of course, shows that it came from Daniel Roe. He, however, got it by will of Isaac Hopkins. Isaac Hopkins may, in fact, have thought he conveyed it properly earlier but in fact did not or simply left it in his will to Roe to be used specifically for church purposes. This congregation remained affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church, but blacks were segregated into their own conference (the Delaware Conference) and their own circuits, or charges. It was only in the mid-twentieth century that black and white conferences united, though the circuits are still segregated.

Little is known of the late-nineteenth-century history of the church. There is no knowledge of church establishment of one of the 1865-70 schools assisted by the Baltimore Association for the Moral and Educational Improvement of the Colored People. Although a school may have been established and held in the old church, or even in a separate building, it was not until 1884 that the trustees sold the county school commissioners a small piece of land for a public school. That school deed gives no indication of an existing school there.

According to the anniversary program, a lot was bought in the 1880s from a Mrs. Emilene Lochs, a community resident, for a parsonage. "The building of this parsonage marked the beginning of the Galena Circuit or Charge [of the Delaware Conference]; previous to this Olivet Methodist Church belonged to Millington Circuit." Now privately owned, this building is to the north, on the opposite side of the road, at the 90° turn of Olivet Hill Road toward lower Olivet Hill.

Also according to the program, "in 1907 under the leadership of another young man, Rev. J. W. Jefferson, the old frame structure was moved to one side of the lot and the present church building was erected and donated. In 1949 the exterior of the church was remodeled by the young Reverend Ethelbert Maddox." (Presumably the reference is to the composition siding.) The moved-aside old church was finally removed after it became too dilapidated for any use. The 1951 anniversary program indicates that by that

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post-World War II date, the future of Olivet Hill Church was threatened by the changes that had affected the community--"Today, the outlook of the future church looks dark. Let us be inspired by the great achievements wrought by our progenitors."

About 1979 the church was closed after the ceiling fell into the nave. The members of Olivet Hill Church transferred to another church of the Sassafras Charge, John Wesley Church in Sassafras; the third church of the charge is in Warwick, Cecil County. Children's Sunday School classes continue at the old one-teacher Olivet Hill Public School adjacent to the church, however, under the auspices of the Olivet Hill Community Association. The church purchased that property after the school was closed in 1958.

9.1 Continued

An Illustrated Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne Counties, Md. Philadelphia:
Lake, Griffing and Stevenson, 1877.

Program from 88th Anniversary Celebration of Olivet Methodist Church,
1951.

William Henry Williams, The Garden of American Methodism: The
Delmarva Peninsula, 1769-1820. Wilmington, Del.: Published for the Peninsula
Conference of the United Methodist Church, 1984.

Kent - 364
Olivet Hill ME Church
Olivet Hill Rd.
Galena, MD 21635

1879, 1909

Olivet Hill ME Church is one of the oldest and most historic sites for black Methodists in Kent County. The local white Methodist Church at Galena was founded by Bishop Francis Asbury in 1773. During 1842, that original frame structure was sold to a group of free blacks and removed to a tract of land donated by Cornelius Scott. This church became known as Olivet Hill. This church was rebuilt in 1909. The area the church is located in is known as Olivet Hill and it is a community of small farms owned by blacks. Olivet Hill ME Church is abandoned

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

K-364
MAGI#1503644608

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC Olivet Hill ME Church

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Olivet Hill Rd.

CITY, TOWN

Galena

VICINITY OF Olivet Hill

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Kent

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☒ DISTRICT
☐ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC
☒ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED
☒ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
☒ ACCESSIBLE
☐ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ MUSEUM
☐ COMMERCIAL
☐ PARK
☐ EDUCATIONAL
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☒ RELIGIOUS
☐ ENTERTAINMENT
☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ GOVERNMENT
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ INDUSTRIAL
☐ OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Trustees, Olivet Hill ME Church
C/O J. Chapman O'Dell

Telephone #: 648-5212

STREET & NUMBER

Box 107

CITY, TOWN

Galena

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code
MD 21635

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Kent CO. Court House

Liber #: HN 16

Folio #: 431

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

STATE

MD

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

N/A

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☒ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE 1879

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Olivet Hill M.E. Church stands 12' from the east side of Olivet Hill Rd. at its crest. The church faces west. It is a simple gable-ended building(east-west) with a short tower at the southwest corner of the front facade. This tower has an open belfry and is surmounted with a short graceful spire. The church measures 36' across and is 52' long. It is constructed of weatherboard but is now covered with grey and russet asbestos composite shingles. The entrance has double 2-panel oak doors and is sided with rectangular red lights (one on each side). The entrance has a triangular arc atop with three pieces of colored glass (blue) . There is a single 12' lancet window with rose and blue glass in the front. There are three of these 12' lancet colored glass windows (rose & blue) on each side of the main body of the church. Olivet Hill M.E. Church is abandoned.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES 1879

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Olivet Hill M.E. Church is one of the oldest and most historic Methodist sites for blacks on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. The local white Methodist Church (at Galena) was founded by Bishop Francis Asbury in 1773. During 1842, that original frame structure was sold to a group of free blacks and removed to a tract of ground donated by Cornelius Scott. This church became known as Olivet Hill. This church was rebuilt in 1909. The area the church is located in is known as Olivet Hill and it is a community of small farms owned by blacks.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION _____

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE _____

COUNTY _____

STATE _____

COUNTY _____

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE James W. Clark, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION Maryland Commission on Afro-American
History & Culture

DATE _____

STREET & NUMBER 20 Dean Street

TELEPHONE 269-2893

CITY OR TOWN Annapolis

STATE Maryland

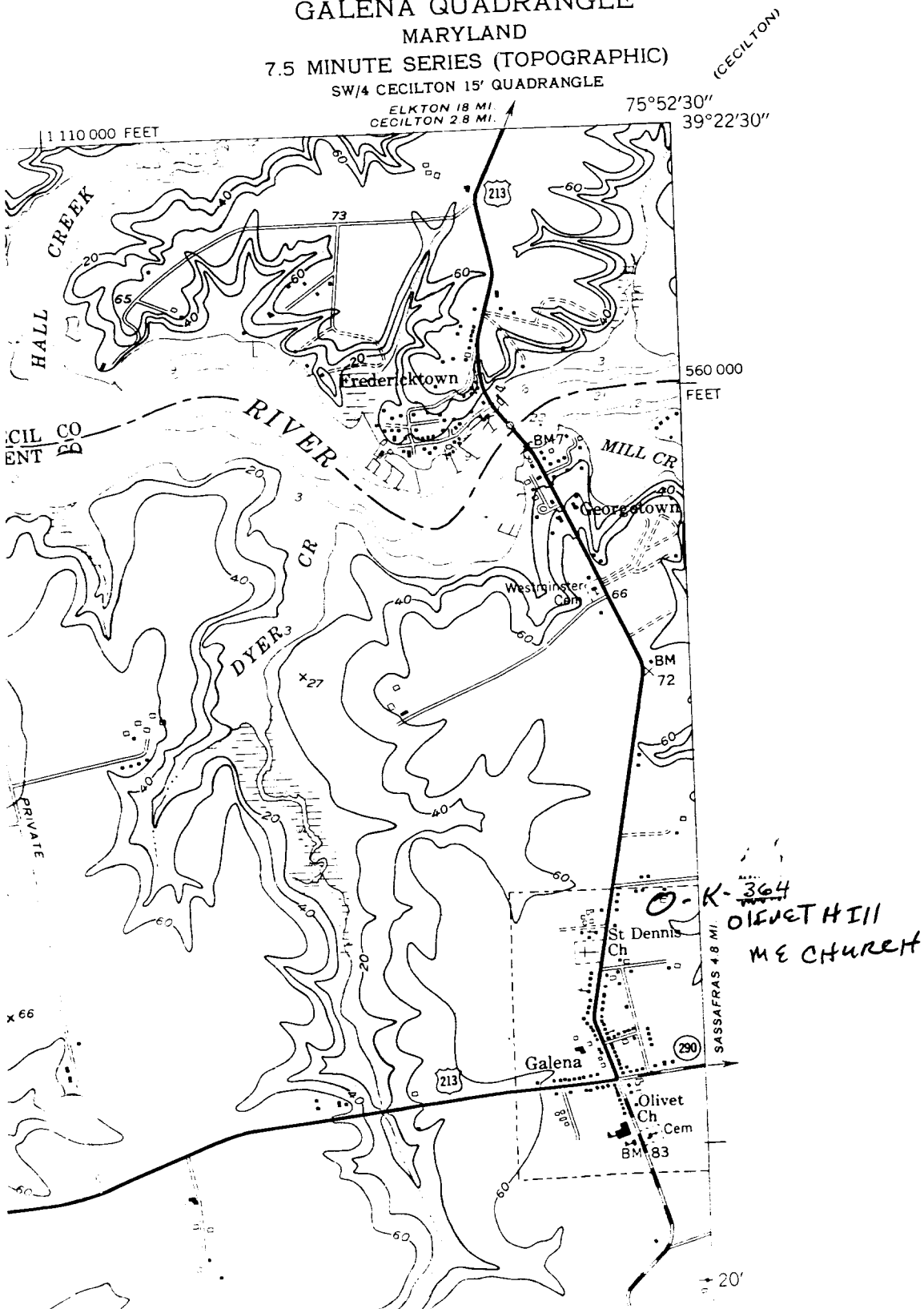
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

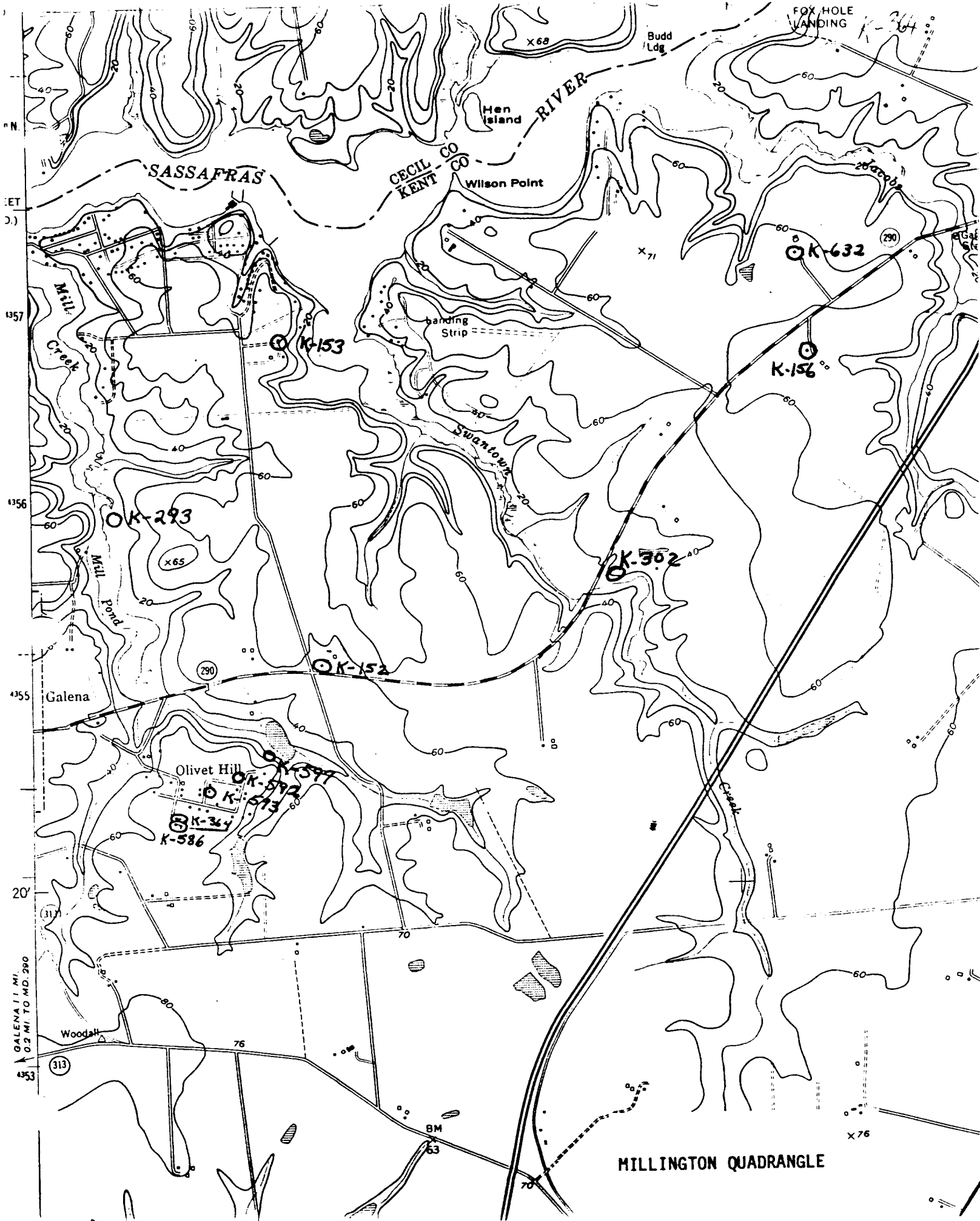
The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

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GALENA QUADRANGLE
MARYLAND
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SW/4 CECILTON 15' QUADRANGLE







1<364 - ~~2~~

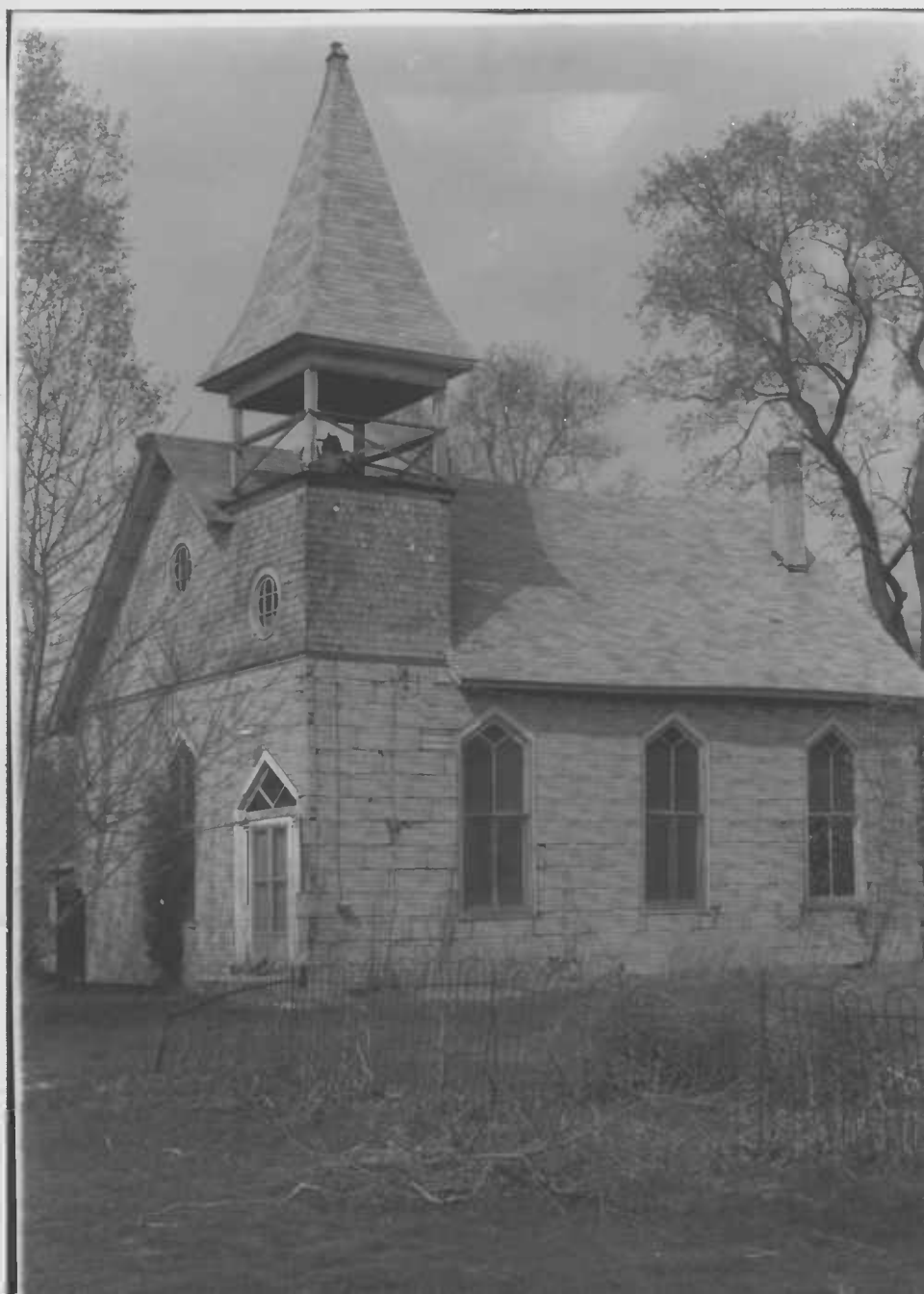
K-364

Olivet Hill Methodist Church

Olivet Hill, near Galena

M. Q. Fallaw - 4/6/85

View to northwest



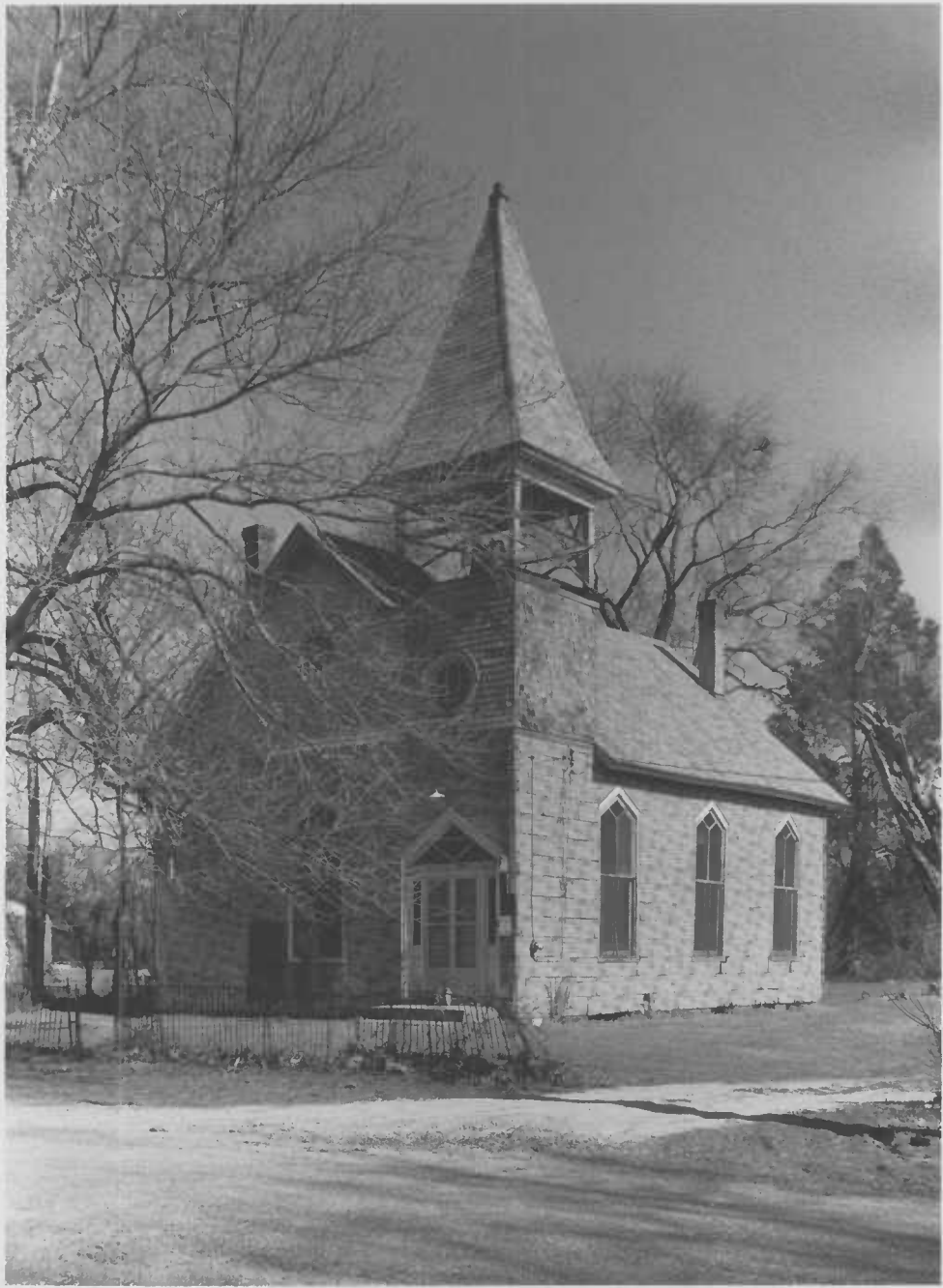
K-364

Olivet Hill Methodist Church

Olivet Hill, near Galena

M. Q. Fallaw - 4/6/85

View to northeast



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olivet Hill Methodist Episcopal church

Galena, Kent Co.

Michael Hosford

2/1979

Southwest elevation